



# Resources

## Select NRCLD Publications

Winter 2007

The National Research Center on Learning Disabilities (NRCLD) was funded in late 2001 by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to help address the complex nature of the issues and diversity of discussion surrounding specific learning disabilities (SLD). NRCLD's purpose was to continue the research on critical issues raised in white papers, summit, and continuing roundtable discussions that had been started with OSEP's SLD Initiative. As a result of the NRCLD work, a number of special issue journals have been published as well as various other peer-reviewed publications. The following provides a listing and brief abstract of some of those publications.

○ Deshler, D.D., Mellard, D.F., Tollefson, J.M., & Byrd, S.E. (2005). Research topics in responsiveness to intervention: Introduction to a special series. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 38(6), 483-484.

This introduction to the special series provides an overview of the December 2003 Responsiveness to Intervention (RTI) Symposium, hosted by the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities (NRCLD). This introduction presents the rationale for the symposium, participant selection, and key questions that provided the underlying framework. It also introduces the 14 symposium papers featured in this special issue. Finally, it briefly describes the NRCLD's research, dissemination, and technical assistance efforts related to the assessment and identification of students with learning disabilities.

○ Fuchs, D., Deshler, D.D., & Reschly, D.J. (2004). National Research Center on Learning Disabilities: Multimethod studies of identification and classification issues. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 27(4), 189-195.

This article discusses the role of advocacy groups and private foundations, such as the NRCLD, in identification and classification of LD. As long as the validity of assessment and identification methods is unresolved, the LD field and the children it serves are vulnerable. The article outlines the position of the NRCLD on identification and classification issues.

○ Fuchs, D. & Fuchs, L. (2005). Responsiveness-to-intervention: A blueprint for practitioners, policymakers, and parents. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 38(1), 57-61.

The authors define RTI by outlining a four-step process and distinguish between what they believe are "acceptable practices" from more desirable "best practices." They then illustrate how the process might work by presenting a series of four "case studies." They conclude by making clear several of their preferences and emphasize that the blueprint is but one way to define RTI.

○ Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L.S., & Compton, D.L. (2004). Identifying reading disabilities by responsiveness-to-instruction: Specifying measures and criteria. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 27(4), 216-227.

Two types of assessment (problem solving and standard treatment protocol) within RTI are described. Two necessary components (measures and classification criteria) to assess RTI are specified. The data collected from grades 1 and 2 are analyzed to compare the soundness of alternative methods of assessing instructional responsiveness to identify reading disabilities. Future research is outlined to prospectively and longitudinally explore classification issues emerging from the current analyses.

- Fuchs, L.S. (2003). Assessing intervention responsiveness: Conceptual and technical issues. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 18*(3), 172-186.

In this article, the author uses examples in the literature to explore conceptual and technical issues associated with options for specifying three learning disability assessment components. The author summarizes research contrasting alternative assessment methods within an intervention responsiveness approach to LD identification. Conclusions are drawn and future related work is described.

- Fuchs, L.S., & Fuchs, D. (2006). Implementing responsiveness-to-intervention to identify learning disabilities. *Perspectives on Dyslexia, 32*(1), 39-43.

Six procedural dimensions that constitute the RTI-LD (Responsiveness To Intervention–Learning Disability) identification process are identified. For each of these procedural dimensions, the authors describe some options for implementation and then offer recommendations for how schools might proceed. Two case studies are provided to illustrate an RTI process that incorporates the recommended practices.

- Fuchs, L.S., & Fuchs, D. “Progress Monitoring, Accountability, and LD Identification.” Testimony given to the President’s Commission on Excellence in Special Education, Washington, D.C., April 2002.

This testimony was provided at the request of the commission. It describes progress monitoring and its place in a special education research agenda. Much of the testimony focuses on Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) and discusses its potential to address two important, pressing problems for special education: 1) how to measure the learning of students with disabilities and the effectiveness of special education and 2) how to identify students with learning disabilities using a response to treatment classification model.

- Fuchs, L.S., Fuchs, D., & Compton, D.L. (2004). Monitoring early reading development in first grade: Word identification fluency versus nonsense word fluency. *Exceptional Children, 71*(1), 7-21.

This study contrasts the validity of two early reading curriculum-based measurement (CBM) measures: word identification fluency and nonsense word fluency. Findings are discussed in terms of the measures’ utility for identifying children in need of intensive instruction and for monitoring children’s progress through first grade.

- Fuchs, L.S., Fuchs, D., & Speece, D.L. (2002). Treatment validity as a unifying construct for identifying learning disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 25*, 33-45.

The purpose of this article is to revisit the issue of treatment validity as a framework for identifying learning disabilities. In 1995, an eligibility assessment process, rooted within a treatment validity model, was proposed. The authors review the components of this model and reconsider the advantages and disadvantages of verifying a special education program’s effectiveness prior to placement.

- Fuchs, D., Mock, D., Morgan, P.L., & Young, C.L. (2003). Responsiveness-to-intervention: Definitions, evidence, and implications for the learning disabilities construct. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 18*(3), 157-171.

The authors describe two basic versions of RTI: the “problem-solving” model and the “standard-protocol” approach. They review empirical evidence bearing on the effectiveness and feasibility of these approaches and conclude that more needs to be researched before RTI may be viewed as a valid means of identifying students with LD.

- Mellard, D.F. (2004). Responsiveness to intervention (RTI model). Unpublished manuscript, University of Kansas.

The author describes how responsiveness to intervention (RTI) has gained momentum as a means of determining whether a student has a learning disability. RTI is an assessment method that incorporates intense instruction focusing on improving student's skill deficits with careful monitoring of the student's progress. The article discusses the critical features and attributes of RTI along with issues for its implementation.

- Mellard, D.F. (2004). Understanding responsiveness to intervention in learning disabilities determination. Retrieved February 20, 2007, from the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities Web site: <http://www.nrclد.org/publications/papers/mellard.shtml>.

This article reviews the features associated with RTI and briefly outlines research and technical assistance and dissemination activities that are occurring across the nation involving staff from six Regional Resource Centers, the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities, and selected school districts.

- Mellard, D.F., Byrd, S.E., Johnson, E., Tollefson, J.M., & Boesche, L. (2004). Foundations and research on identifying model responsiveness-to-intervention sites. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 27(4), 243-256.

This article provides a framework for understanding how RTI fits as one LD determination component. The authors describe research on RTI and outline NRCLD's research efforts to examine current RTI implementation in schools.

- Mellard, D.F., Deshler, D.D., & Barth, A. (2004). SLD identification: It's not simply a matter of building a better mousetrap. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 27(4), 229-242.

This article argues that factors beyond specific SLD identification technology significantly influence the decision-making process and ultimately decisions about who is and who is not LD. Results from focus group discussions with six stakeholder

groups are reported, indicating that a broad array of factors beyond a student's performance on formal and informal assessments influence ultimate decisions about a student's eligibility for learning disability services.

- Reschly, D.J. (2005). LD identification: Primary intervention, secondary intervention, then what? *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 38(6), 510-515.

The characteristics of programs preventing low achievement that often lead to a diagnosis of and long-term special education placement generally are well-established. However, the degree to which these programs prevent specific learning disability (SLD) is uncertain and the subsequent procedures for determining SLD eligibility are very much at issue. This paper briefly evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of three alternatives for determining SLD eligibility when primary and secondary intervention efforts are proven inadequate for individual children.

- Reschly, D.J., & Hosp, J.L. (2004). State SLD identification policies and practices. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 27(4), 197-213.

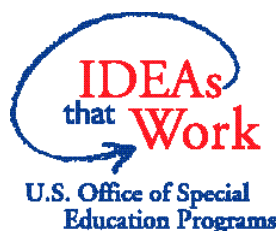
These authors describe how specific learning disabilities (SLD) conceptual definitions and classification criteria were examined through a survey of state education agency (SEA) SLD contact persons in an effort to update information last published in 1996. Results revealed that SLD diagnostic decisions depend heavily on SEA classification criteria, producing potential changes in the eligibility of children for special education depending on their state of residence. Dissatisfaction with current SLD criteria also is discussed along with likely future trends.

○ Reschly, D.J., Hosp, J.L., & Schmied, C.M. (2003). And miles to go: State SLD requirements and authoritative recommendations. Retrieved February 20, 2007, from the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities Web site: <http://www.nrclld.org/research/states/index.shtml>.

This article describes the controversy regarding definitions and classification criteria for specific learning disabilities (SLD) that has existed from the inception of the diagnostic construct in the mid-1960s. This paper focuses on the major events leading to the widespread rejection of the discrepancy criterion and an analysis of current state SLD requirements in relation to proposed changes in SLD classification criteria. Possibilities for and barriers to change are addressed in the analysis.

○ Vaughn, S., & Fuchs, L.S. (2003). Redefining learning disabilities as inadequate response to instruction: The promise and potential problems. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 18(3), 137-146.

In this introductory article, a response-to-instruction approach to learning disabilities identification is discussed. An overview of the promise and potential pitfalls of such an approach is provided.



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